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International Labour Organization

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its fortieth session (see E/2009/24, chap. I, sect. A), the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the International Labour Organization, which is presented to the Commission for information. The Commission is requested to take note of the report.

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Report of the International Labour Organization on its new statistical organization and on labour statistics

Summary

The present report describes the reorganization of the statistical activities of the International Labour Organization that it carried out in order to take on a more active role in assisting countries to produce quality statistics on decent work. A key aim of the reorganization is to compile more timely information from countries, a need reinforced by the jobs crisis. Furthermore, the report describes the recent statistical activities of the Organization, including the development of measures of labour underutilization, in follow-up to the suggestions of the Statistical Commission at its thirty-ninth and fortieth sessions. The report also covers recent activities on labour statistics frameworks, occupational classifications, the harmonization of wage statistics and the measurement of decent work through new indicators in several pilot countries.

I. Reorganization of the statistical activities of the International Labour Organization

1. The International Labour Organization (ILO) has decided to create a new Department of Statistics reporting directly to its Director-General, integrating the former Bureau of Statistics that until May 2009 reported to the ILO Policy Integration and Statistics Department. This change acknowledges the increasing importance that ILO assigns to the production of reliable and comprehensive statistical data on labour, considering it an essential part of the promotion and implementation of the decent work agenda, endorsed by the Economic and Social Council and many regional meetings of presidents and heads of State worldwide, and to the follow-up to the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization. The production and dissemination of labour statistics is recognized as a key means of strengthening the knowledge base of the International Labour Office and the capacity of member States and employers' and workers' organizations. The reorganization and restructuring of statistical activities in the Office was considered a high priority in pursuing those goals. The reform, quite radical within ILO, seeks to strengthen member States' capacity to undertake statistical activities not only as regards traditional labour statistics, but also to produce and disseminate statistics on social protection, rights at work and social dialogue, which along with employment encompass the strategic areas of the decent work agenda. Moreover, the severity of the jobs crisis has underscored the need to reinforce technical assistance provided to countries and to compile a larger set of statistics in a more timely manner in order to more effectively monitor the crisis.

2. The new Department of Statistics is responsible for compiling and making available in a timely manner statistics on the four dimensions of decent work. Since May 2009, the compilation, quality control and dissemination of ILO statistical information have been centrally managed and coordinated by the Department of Statistics. All methodologies and databases developed by different units within sectors and regions of ILO are coordinated by the Department, thus avoiding duplication and discrepancies in methodology. The centralization of management and coordination is intended to establish concrete quality-control measures to ensure that the statistical information disseminated by ILO meets acceptable statistical standards. Moreover, it seeks to achieve coherence and integration in the technical advice given from the regions, in line with the Department's guidelines, ensuring coordination and standardization of criteria in the technical advice provided to countries and constituents. It also seeks to facilitate the process of defining new indicators, consolidate and update the definition and coverage of existing indicators and mobilize resources to meet constituents' needs to produce, compile and disseminate labour and decent work statistics. Under its mandate, the Department is required to implement a mechanism to oversee all statistical activities and methodologies of ILO to ensure that they meet quality standards that can be considered "official" by ILO.

3. The need to assist member States to produce primary data in accordance with international standards is deemed a priority, targeting in particular developing countries. To this effect, ILO will strengthen its own capacity to provide technical assistance in the design of relevant surveys, such as labour force surveys, income and expenditure surveys, establishment surveys and household surveys in general, and also to assist countries in developing other sources of labour information, such

as administrative records and special statistical operations. The analysis of such information will lead to a better understanding of labour markets and their functioning, especially labour demand and supply, wages, hours and conditions of work and qualitative aspects of the employment relationship. Decentralization in the provision of technical advice in the various regions is also a key element that is being established. Towards that end, that establishment of a network of labour statisticians based in each of the regions is seen as a priority.

4. The reform centres on four key elements: (a) an internal reorganization in order to face new demands; (b) the identification of priorities, in terms of information gaps, by topic and of the capacity of member States to produce quality statistical data; (c) the updating of the sources and methods used to produce labour statistics at the national level worldwide and an evaluation of how international statistical standards are being applied by countries worldwide; and (d) a complete overhaul of the compilation procedures to be put in place by ILO in the future in order to provide a state-of-the-art, user-friendly database that contains timely and well-documented labour statistics.

5. The internal reorganization is being carried out in order to accompany the process described above. The Decent Work Data Production Unit was created to compile short-term and annual indicators and to implement new ways of collecting information from countries. It seeks to take full advantage of modern techniques and procedures like the SDMX (standard data and metadata exchange) protocol by actively using electronic questionnaires and securing agreements with other international organizations in order to lower the reporting burden on countries. The need to have a single window or portal to all employment and decent work statistics has been identified, and this will be coordinated within the Department by the Unit. Furthermore, a provisional organizational structure has been set up to strengthen the various statistical sources in the production of labour statistics. A Household Survey Unit has been created to support the standard-setting of labour statistics derived from this type of survey. The Unit will deal with all statistics collected by labour force surveys, income and expenditure surveys, time-use surveys and all other surveys that use a list of households as the sampling frame. In addition, other members of the Department will be dealing with establishment surveys, gender statistics, administrative records, consumer price indexes and labour migration, among other topics. The organization is seen as provisional owing to the need for ILO to provide more resources to the Department to enhance its capacity in terms of labour statisticians and related expertise. The reorganization will entail the upgrading of the technical capacities of the professional and support staff, and also the incorporation of new professionals to face the challenges ahead.

6. A set of priorities for different topics has been identified on the basis of recommendations of the eighteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians, held in Geneva in November/December 2008, as well as the programme review on labour statistics that was prepared, at the Commission's request, by the Office for National Statistics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, at the thirty-ninth session. In particular, the Commission has suggested that the International Conference of Labour Statisticians might wish to review its methods of operation, in particular the frequency and duration of its sessions. The Commission requested that ILO report to it at its fortieth session on the outcomes of the Conference, which was done in 2009. As stated in the final report already submitted to the Commission, at the eighteenth International Conference of Labour

Statisticians, it was decided to organize the Conference every three years for a shorter duration, of one week. However, owing to the ongoing reform within ILO, the Department of Statistics will not be able to organize the Conference in 2011 as requested, since its efforts now are being targeted at strengthening its capacity. Provisionally, the next Conference is being proposed for 2012, subject to the finalization of the reorganization of the Department of Statistics and related structures in terms of technical capacity.

7. The Department of Statistics is identifying a set of priority countries, especially in the developing world, where gaps in the quality and quantity of labour and decent work statistics exist, in order to plan and organize a systematic, proactive approach in support of the production of national statistics. This is being done in close collaboration with the regional and national structures of ILO in close cooperation with the United Nations system, the national statistical offices and the ministries of labour. This effort is considered crucial, since it will entail close coordination with donors and the multilateral system in order to deliver an adequate and coherent package of support for ongoing and planned statistical activities in those countries. To this end, the Department of Statistics is now mapping the state of labour statistics worldwide.

8. A top priority for ILO is to reorganize and update its methods of compiling labour statistics into user-friendly applications that are easily accessible. The ILO Governing Body has requested that ILO statistics be made available to the international community in a more timely manner while ensuring quality. This is especially critical at the present moment, which is characterized by an acute jobs crisis triggered by the economic crisis. Since economic recovery usually does not imply that jobs of sufficient quality are being created in sufficient quantity and given that recent experience indicates that employment and decent work will take several years to recover after economic growth resumes, the need for better and more timely information, as urged by ILO member States and policymakers, is underscored. Member States strongly support the idea of developing a proper set of leading labour indicators with timely information in order to facilitate appropriate policy action. This urgency is putting a strain on the newly created Department of Statistics, which is responsible for improving the coverage and quality of labour statistics. New methods of compiling data using exchange protocols such as SDMX and other ways of exchanging data between countries and international organizations will be put into practice. Moreover, collecting data through electronic questionnaires and other updated methods will drive the adoption of new modalities and platforms to be used in the design and implementation of ILO data production processes. Key statistical institutions in member States will be informed of those changes and their cooperation will be sought.

9. Putting into practice the recommendations of the eighteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians and enhancing technical support for national statistical systems are seen as major aspects of the new mandate. However, before embarking on these important tasks, the Department of Statistics decided to undertake an internal evaluation of its own activities by external reviewers, which was carried out in October 2009. The evaluation brought to light the need to redefine the entire system of data compilation and information flows and to strengthen ILO capacity in terms of producing better statistical products. Several publications will be redefined, and many decades-old tools are under scrutiny now. Furthermore, internal capacity in terms of expertise to provide technical advice to

countries is considered limited compared with the substantial increase in demand, reflecting the slack labour situation. The need to cover new and important emerging topics and to react quickly has been highlighted in many regions, especially in the developing world. The Department of Statistics is actively working to mobilize internal and external extrabudgetary funds to support such important issues. Strengthening internal capacity and being proactive in its technical advice will be important for supporting countries in the application of international statistical standards.

10. Updating the sources and methods in use worldwide has been identified as a key starting point for reform of the technical advice and support provided to countries to facilitate the production of better-quality labour statistics. Moreover, important topics such as wage statistics, the follow-up of recommendations of the last International Conference of Labour Statisticians and the different consultations with the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities, among others, as well as emerging issues demanded by ILO constituents, such as the development of decent work indicators, are going to be priorities. Promoting working groups and expert meetings where those issues are to be discussed is seen as a revitalized modus operandi to be implemented actively in order to achieve successful outcomes. Once the Department of Statistics fully reorganizes and reinforces its capacity, the ability to actively coordinate and promote the meetings will be reinforced.

II. Recent activities

A. Informal employment

11. A manual entitled "Surveys of informal employment and the informal sector" is a technical guide being prepared by the Department of Statistics, in cooperation with the Delhi Group on Informal Sector Statistics and with financial support by the Government of India. Although a delay in finishing the manual was highlighted in the last session of the Commission, the final draft will be discussed by the Delhi Group at its meeting in Geneva to be held from 27 to 29 January 2010. While some technical assistance has already been provided to countries on this topic, extending technical advice to countries whose surveys do not currently enable them to apply the recommendations of the seventeenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians on informal employment is seen as priority. The final draft of the manual is considered a primary means of achieving member States' adoption and operationalization of these recommendations.

B. Measures of labour underutilization

12. The development of measures of labour underutilization seeks to complement the unemployment rate with a set of indicators that more fully reflects the realities in the world of work in many countries. A technical workshop on the topic was held at ILO from 7 to 9 December 2009. Countries from all regions that during or after the eighteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians expressed an interest in cooperating with ILO on the topic were invited to participate in the event. The workshop established a working group on the topic. The recommendations of the working group may serve as input to a possible revision, at a later stage, of the

current international standards concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment and unemployment adopted by the thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 1982. In addition, ILO has joined a task force to develop indicators supplementing the ILO unemployment rate, which was established by Eurostat.

13. ILO has been a pioneer in the measurement of decent work, testing the set of indicators discussed during the eighteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians and the 2008 Tripartite Meeting of Experts on the Measurement of Decent Work. Statistics for a set of decent work indicators for a group of pilot countries from different regions are being developed by ILO, and the Department of Statistics has been supporting member States through national statistical offices and ministries of labour to identify the necessary indicators and tailor them to national realities. Particularly interesting is the collaboration with the Economic Commission for Europe and the European Commission task force on the quality of employment, in which different pilot countries have started to report in preparation for the next International Conference of Labour Statisticians.

C. International Standard Classification of Occupations

14. Since the adoption of the updated International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08) by a meeting of experts on labour statistics in December 2007 and its subsequent endorsement by the ILO Governing Body, ILO has provided a range of tools to support the implementation of ISCO-08 and to assist countries in adapting national occupation classifications. The final classification structure has been available in English, French and Spanish on the ILO website since early 2008. A final draft in English of the detailed definitions of all ISCO-08 groups was released on the ILO website in July 2009. ILO contacts having responsibility for national and regional classifications have been advised that the material was sufficiently final to be used for adapting national classifications in line with ISCO-08.

15. Correspondence tables comparing ISCO-88 and ISCO-08 are also available. It is anticipated that an updated index of occupational titles will be released in English in the near future. French and Spanish versions will be released in 2010.

16. Versions of the ISCO-08 structure (but not definitions of groups) have been developed by Eurostat in all languages of the European Union. A number of countries around the world have either already adapted ISCO-08 for use in their national occupational classification or are undertaking revisions of their national occupation classifications in line with ISCO-08. Steps are also being taken to promote consistency and harmony between ISCO-08 and various regional classifications of occupations, such as the Arab Occupational Classification.

17. ILO will give high priority to the provision of regional training, technical assistance and advice on occupational classification directly to countries or groups of countries. Based on experience gained from those activities, ILO also proposes to prepare a manual and training material on how to adapt ISCO-08 for use in national and regional settings.

D. Methodological work to improve measurement of the changing structure of the labour force

18. ILO anticipates commencing work to review the International Classification of Status in Employment in 2010. This reflects the view of the eighteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians that priority needed to be given in ILO methodological work on the changing structure of the labour force. This work is likely to involve a review of current national practices and problems related to such categories of employment as employee, employer, own account worker and contributing family worker. There is a need to focus on the treatment of such groups as owner-managers of incorporated enterprises, contractors, subsistence workers, volunteers and others whose classification is somewhat ambiguous within the existing status in employment framework and who may be treated differently in different contexts. Options to improve the current classification would then be elaborated. Technical advice and proposals would be sought from a relatively informal group of experts, as well as from the Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications, before concrete proposals were widely circulated for comment and consideration by the Meeting of Experts in Labour Statistics and results or progress reports were submitted to a future session of the International Conference of Labour Statisticians. It is likely that this work would be an important input to any future work to review the current international standards on statistics of the economically active population, employment and unemployment.

E. Wage and hour statistics by industry and occupation

19. Pursuant to resolutions of the eighteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians, ILO is studying and discussing the redefinition of the *ILO October Inquiry* publication in terms of collecting data on employment, wages and hours in a uniform way worldwide. A process of consultation involving a wide array of experts (both users and producers of data) is being carried out that will serve to identify a smaller set of industries and occupations and key labour market variables in order to monitor the staffing patterns, hours and wages by selected industries and occupations. The traditional questionnaire will no longer be carried out; rather, an alternative procedure will soon be tested. The collection of food price information will also be redefined, although the basic information will be maintained to ensure continuity in the time series.

F. Organization, duration and frequency of the International Conference of Labour Statisticians

20. Although the eighteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians discussed the organization, duration and frequency of its meetings, and suggested that the frequency of the Conference be increased to once every three years instead of the present five years, along with shortening its duration from two weeks to five days in order to facilitate more senior participation in and continuity between conferences, ILO will not be in a position to conduct the next Conference in 2011, as originally suggested, mainly because of its ongoing major reorganization. The need to focus ILO resources on monitoring the jobs crisis and to reinforce the existing capacity of its technical expertise, along with the need to build stronger ties

with the national statistical offices and to coordinate more closely with international organizations, prevent ILO from organizing the Conference in 2011. Depending on the achievements made in the reorganization process, ILO will work towards convening the nineteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 2012. However, ILO will report to the Commission next year on this question.

III. Conclusion

21. The Commission is invited to:

(a) Encourage national statistical offices and international organizations to lead the different working groups proposed at the last session of the Statistical Commission on different topics of labour statistics, especially taking into account the disparity between the developing and developed world in the status of labour and decent work statistics;

(b) Encourage donor agencies and the international financial institutions to engage in supporting the production of key surveys that serve to monitor the jobs crisis and to evaluate the actions taken to prevent a worsening of the labour situation. In particular, the programme to strengthen labour force and household surveys in Africa is seen as a priority, as well as the technical support provided in many other countries in Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. Providing support for other information sources is also important, such as the development and strengthening of administrative records and establishment surveys;

(c) Take note of the reasons given by ILO to postpone the nineteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians beyond the scheduled date of 2011. ILO will try to work towards having it in 2012 and will report to the Commission thereon;

(d) Note that the reorganization of ILO statistical activities will change the methods of collecting and storing data, lead to a closer relationship with national statistical offices and strengthen the capacity for providing technical assistance to countries and coordination with other international agencies. ILO suggests that the Commission encourage member States to participate actively in this new joint effort.

22. The Statistical Commission is invited to take note of the views expressed by ILO in the present report.

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Statistical Commission
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Items for information: statistics on drugs and drug use

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its fortieth session (see E/2009/24, chap. I.A), the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on the status of crime and drug statistics. The report provides an overview of the activities of UNODC and discusses the challenges faced in the collection, analysis and dissemination of drug and crime statistics at the national and international levels. It also presents the concerns raised by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in relation to the quality and availability of crime and drug data. Based on an expert consultation, the report presents suggestions on how to improve the tools used by the Office in the collection of drug and crime statistics and calls for a more active involvement of national statistical offices, particularly in relation to crime statistics and the implementation of victimization surveys. The Crime Commission requested that the Statistical Commission be consulted in the implementation on its resolution on data collection. The Statistical Commission is invited to take note of the report.

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Report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on statistics on drugs, drug use and crime

I. Crime statistics

A. Background

1. Statistics on crime represent a crucial element for crime prevention policymaking and are collected by virtually every country. Nevertheless, the availability of comparable information on crime at the international level is very limited. By their nature, administrative data on crime reflect the criminal justice response to criminal events that are brought to the attention of authorities, rather than the actual amount of crime committed. This makes crime statistics particularly difficult to compare across countries. Over the past few decades, victimization surveys have become an important complement to administrative data recorded by the police and the criminal justice system. Several countries regularly carry out household surveys on victimization and the data are largely used to monitor and develop policy.

2. Although victimization surveys have proved to be a very practical tool for many countries, including developing countries, to obtain estimates of crime levels, only in a few countries are these surveys carried out or coordinated by national statistical offices. Other Government institutions or non-governmental organizations are more often engaged in this type of survey. Within certain limits, survey results may be comparable across countries, thus providing an important source of information at the international level.

3. As ways are identified to address the challenges related to measuring crime, crime statistics are increasingly attracting the attention of the statistical community. There is also a recognition of the central role that crime prevention has in social and economic development. The report of the Expert Group Meeting on the Scope and Content of Social Statistics (ESA/STAT/AC.161/L.6), held in New York from 9 to 12 September 2008, identified crime and criminal justice as one of the major social concerns to be accompanied by a relevant data-collection system. Among the emerging issues identified by the Expert Group, three fall in the area of crime statistics (classification of crimes, human trafficking and violence against women).

B. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and international activities in the field of crime statistics

4. The work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and other international activities related to crime statistics can be classified into three areas: data collection, analysis and dissemination; development of methodology; and technical assistance to countries.

1. Data collection and dissemination

5. Crime and criminal justice statistics have regularly been collected by UNODC since the 1970s. The United Nations Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems collects police and judicial statistics from all Member

States. The Survey has been conducted 11 times so far, with data gathered for the period 1976 to 2008.[1]

6. The Survey of Crime Trends is carried out in cooperation with the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and sent to national statistical offices and to Ministries of Foreign Affairs in all Member States.[2] Data collected through the Survey is published on the Internet. Country coverage is usually around 50 per cent of the 192 countries. In 2009, UNODC compiled statistics on intentional homicide with an expanded geographical coverage (198 countries), with the objective of maintaining a wide international series of statistics on one of the most relevant crime indicators.[3]

7. In its resolution 2009/25 on improving the collection, reporting and analysis of data to enhance knowledge on trends in specific areas of crime, the Economic and Social Council requested UNODC to establish an intergovernmental working group of experts to review and improve international data-collection tools and reporting systems in order to increase the accuracy and quality of data on the world crime situation, and to report thereon to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in coordination with the Statistical Commission. In order to address the requests contained in that resolution, an open-ended intergovernmental Group of Experts will meet from 8 to 10 February 2010 in Argentina. It is expected that the meeting will develop recommendations on the improvement of tools for the collection of relevant crime data, in particular the United Nations Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems, and of the collection, collation, analysis and reporting processes.[4] Participants at the meeting will include representatives from crime and criminal justice institutions and national statistical offices. Another expert consultation took place in January 2009, which provided input to UNODC in a number of areas, including the revision of the Survey questionnaire and the development of core indicators.

2. Methodology development

8. UNODC has developed and promoted a number of standard methodologies in the field of crime to support countries in the collection, analysis and dissemination of administrative and survey data. The *United Nations Manual for the Development of a System of Criminal Justice Statistics*[5] represents international methodological standards and guidelines in this area. In addition, UNODC and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) have recently finalized the Manual on Victimization Surveys, which aims to support Member States in the design and implementation of household surveys on crime and victimization. Jointly with the Conference of European Statisticians, UNODC is now pursuing a new area of work on crime classification to be used for statistical purposes at the international level. The

[1] Results and responses are available from the UNODC website: www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/United-Nations-Surveys-on-Crime-Trends-and-the-Operations-of-Criminal-Justice-Systems.html.

[2] A different process is followed for European Union countries where questionnaires are sent to a national focal point for crime statistics who has been appointed to serve in a Working Group established at the Statistical Office of the European Communities.

[3] International homicide statistics are also accessible through UNdata (http://data.un.org).

[4] The report of the Group of Experts will be submitted to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its nineteenth session, to be held from 17 to 21 May 2010.

[5] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.XVII.6.

ECE/UNODC Task Force on Crime Classification started its work at the end of 2009 and is expected to have finished by the end of 2010. The main outputs will be a set of principles on international crime classification systems for statistical use and a case study of selected offences. Furthermore, UNODC is involved in inter-agency efforts on the development of indicators on violence against women and juvenile justice information.

3. Technical assistance

9. UNODC continues to provide technical assistance to requesting countries to carry out victimization surveys and improve the collection and analysis of crime and criminal justice statistics. The primary targets for assistance are usually statistical units of crime and criminal justice institutions, national and subnational observatories on crime and national statistical offices. Within national statistical offices, UNODC aims to enhance their capacity to efficiently coordinate crime statistics and to include more systematically the use of victimization surveys (or apply victimization modules in ongoing surveys) into their national statistical plan.

C. Challenges in the field of crime statistics

10. Despite the progress made by countries and international organizations to improve the system of administrative crime statistics and to implement or promote the use of victim surveys, a number of challenges remain. Given that administrative crime statistics are typically generated by police, courts and prisons, the national statistical office often is not involved in the definition of statistical standards for crime statistics and in many countries it lacks the capacity to function as a national coordinating body.

11. With the exception of many countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and a few developing countries, national statistical offices have not yet fully integrated victimization surveys into their programmes or into official statistics, although their relevance has been widely recognized. Implementation of victimization surveys or the use of victimization modules in ongoing surveys is where the national statistical office can provide high-quality and efficient solutions for the improvement of the scope of crime statistics.

12. There is also a need to streamline the work on crime statistics disseminated at the international level in order to address issues related to the quality of data, especially as regards consistency, comparability, timeliness, level of disaggregation, validity, reliability, clarity and transparency. As a first step in this direction, the eleventh Survey of Crime Trends, covering the years 2007 and 2008, was designed with a view to achieving a simple instrument, composed of a core section and two thematic modules,[6] so as to collect more accurate, reliable and internationally comparable data. A simpler, more integrated reporting system may help in the process of assisting Member States to build their capacity to collect and report statistics on crime and criminal justice.

13. In order to increase the status of crime and criminal justice statistics among the international statistical community, it is important to re-establish links between the

[6] One thematic module covered the area of trafficking in persons through the collection of police and court data on the number of offences and characteristics of offenders and victims.

Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Statistical Commission. Despite the involvement of the Statistical Commission in crime statistics since the very early years,[7] this has not been a standing agenda item in recent years. The link between the two Commissions could help to alert the statistical community to the need to measure emerging crimes, such as corruption, and could provide solutions that otherwise would be developed outside the scope of official statistics. Through a more extensive involvement of the Statistical Commission, it may also be possible to increase coordination of work on crime statistics at the international level with a view to avoiding any possible duplication of efforts with other ongoing reporting initiatives, including those of regional and international bodies. As a result, more Member States may be encouraged to report and share their crime and criminal justice statistics.

II. Drug statistics

A. Background

14. Statistics on drugs are crucial for understanding the dynamics of the illicit drug markets and implementing and assessing the efficacy of policy responses. They provide the solid evidence for identifying trends, analysing long- and short-term changes and assessing the changing size of the markets.

15. There are six main statistical areas that make up a comprehensive drug monitoring system at the national and international levels: statistics on illicit drug production, use of drugs and their health consequences, law enforcement activities (such as seizures, arrests), trafficking (movement of illicit drugs within a country or across borders), the price of illicit drugs (at the production, wholesale and street levels) and the purity of drugs (wholesale and street level).

16. The capacity of countries to monitor illicit drug markets varies dramatically across regions and topics. In general, statistics on drug supply are more accurate and more available than statistics on drug use. This is because in the area of drug supply, statistics related, for example, to seizures or arrests rely on a Government policing apparatus that is available in virtually all countries, while proper statistics on drug demand, such as prevalence rates of drug use, require population-based surveys, which are not available in all countries.

17. In some countries there are national observatories or centralized bodies that coordinate the collection, analysis and dissemination of drug statistics, with the purpose of monitoring the overall situation of illicit markets. In other countries, different national authorities are responsible for the different areas of drug statistics and there is no coordination.

[7] Economic and Social Council resolutions 380 (XIII) and 390 (XIII), of 1951, indicated that the Social Commission and the Statistical Commission would work together in discharging the task of collecting international crime statistics.

B. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and international activities in the field of drug statistics

18. The main areas of the work of UNODC related to drug statistics are the collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of data related to illicit drugs in order to develop an evidence-base that can provide information to the international community about the global trends in the various drug markets. UNODC also supports countries in their efforts to collect, analyse and disseminate drug statistics. The three main areas covered are described below.

1. Trend statistics on illicit drug use and supply

19. The main vehicle used by UNODC to monitor trend statistics on the use and supply of illicit drugs is the annual reports questionnaire and reports of individual drug seizures. These tools have been mandated by the drug-related conventions and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and are used to collect annual statistics (or more frequent data in the case of individual seizures) from countries. Utilizing these tools and other existing sources, UNODC regularly informs the Commission on global trends in the markets for the major illicit drugs and produces the annual *World Drug Report* and various regional assessments which provide the international community with an in-depth analysis of the situation in the various markets. In addition to the analytical reports, UNODC disseminates data related to seizures, prices and production through the Internet. However, additional information should be regularly disseminated in order to make accessible all the relevant data collected through the annual reports questionnaire to policymakers, researchers and civil society.

20. In 2009, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs adopted a resolution requesting that data-collection tools and reporting systems utilized to collect information from Member States be reviewed and improved in order to increase the accuracy and quality of data on the world drug situation. In order to address that request, an intergovernmental expert consultation is planned for 12 to 15 January 2010 to review current data-collection tools and propose a revised set of processes for consideration by the Commission in 2010.

2. Monitoring drug cultivation and production

21. UNODC regularly implements, in joint partnership with selected countries, surveys[8] to monitor illicit crop cultivation and drug production. Results from these surveys are used to assess, at the global and country levels, the results of actions carried out by Member States in the fight against illicit crop cultivation. The programme builds national capacity to monitor the cultivation and production of plant-based drugs by supporting national and regional monitoring projects and by providing technical assistance and expert advice directly to Governments. The activities ensure that the results of the illicit crop monitoring and drug production estimates are comparable across different countries and are based on scientific principles and sound, transparent and internationally accepted methods.

[8] Based on satellite images, field measurements and interviews with farmers.

3. Support to countries to improve statistics on illicit drug markets

22. UNODC supports strategic development of drug-use data collection and monitoring in countries and regions where large data gaps exist. When resources are available, it develops and supports the adoption of cost-effective methodologies and supports countries to regularly provide mandated information to UNODC.[9]

C. Challenges in the field of drug statistics

23. In the past decade, there have been several improvements in the quality and availability of data related to illicit drugs, but a number of challenges remain. In many countries, a full account of the extent of use and production of illicit drugs has not yet been made because of a lack of technical and financial resources and/or political will. The result is that for some regions, and for some types of drugs, particularly amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS), data are very scarce. One of the areas where there is also less availability of data is the use of drugs, since comparatively few countries conduct studies to estimate the prevalence of illicit drug use, and existing studies may not continue therefore making it impossible to assess changes.

24. The cultivation of opium and cocaine is concentrated in a few countries. Because of remote-sensing techniques, this cultivation can be monitored with considerable accuracy. Estimates of the production of opium and cocaine, however, require information on the yield of the cultivated crop, which is measured with less certainty. UNODC is continuing its work to improve estimates of yields, but the lack of access to some cultivation areas and continuous meteorological and agronomical changes all pose considerable challenges.

25. The manufacture of ATS has occurred in more than 60 countries around the world. Manufacture occurs close to the consumer market in clandestine facilities and can spread and shift rapidly. Because of this, assessing the ATS market situation is more difficult, relying greatly on the capacity of Member States to collect and report accurate and timely data, which in many regions does not exist.

26. Given the lack of data in some areas and some countries, a number of assumptions and adjustments often need to be made in order to produce reliable and comparable national, regional and global estimates. UNODC faces a number of statistical challenges in defining proper methods to estimate data gaps in order to provide regional and global overviews of drug markets. A closer involvement of the international statistical community in the methods used to collect and estimate data would support a more rigorous use of solid statistical methodology.

III. Role of the Statistical Commission in crime and drug statistics

27. As early as 1951, the Statistical Commission was providing the direction for international work in the field of crime statistics. In 2010, crime is still a topic that is high on the agenda of the policy debate and there is an increasing demand for crime statistics at both the national and international levels. However, the Statistical

[9] Through tools such as the annual reports questionnaire and individual seizure reports.

Commission has not discussed the topic for many years. The same is true for drug statistics. The Statistical Commission needs to be re-engaged into the debate on crime and drug statistics by supporting the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in making decisions relevant to crime and drug statistics that are based on statistical principles. The role of the Statistical Commission could cover the following areas:

(a) Providing comments on the relevance and impact of the activities carried out by UNODC and other international organizations in the field of crime, criminal justice and illicit drug statistics;

(b) Providing advice to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on issues they may need to consider in their deliberations in matters related to crime and drug statistics;

(c) Providing advice to UNODC on priority areas and regions where technical advice and assistance on crime and criminal justice statistics and drug statistics is most needed;

(d) Discussing the role of national statistical offices in coordinating crime and criminal justice statistics;

(e) Discussing the role of national statistical offices in the implementation of victimization surveys;

(f) Including a standing item on crime and criminal justice statistics and drug statistics under the item of its agenda entitled "Items for discussion and decision" to: (i) guide the work of UNODC and other relevant international organizations in the adoption of standard indicators and methodology; and (ii) advise the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice on the finalization of the data-collection tools in the field of crime and drugs statistics.

28. The Statistical Commission is invited to take note of the views expressed by UNODC in the present report.

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Items for information: Washington Group on Disability Statistics

Washington Group on Disability Statistics

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

In accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its fortieth session (see E/2009/24), the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the Commission the report of the Washington Group on Disability Statistics. The report presents the work completed by the Washington Group and its workplan for the year 2010. The Commission may wish to note the findings and conclusions of the Washington Group and the proposal for its future work. The report is submitted to the Statistical Commission for information.

* E/CN.3/2010/1.

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Report of the Washington Group on Disability Statistics

I. Introduction

1. In June 2001, the United Nations International Seminar on the Measurement of Disability recommended that principles and standard forms for indicators of disability be developed for use in censuses. There was a broad consensus on the need for population-based measures of disability for country use and for international comparisons. This work was greatly needed because data on disability, especially in developing countries, are scarce and often of poor quality. Furthermore, international comparability is often lacking, even among developed countries. As a result, the Washington Group on Disability Statistics was formed to address the urgent need.

2. The main purpose of the Washington Group is, therefore, the promotion and coordination of international cooperation in the area of health statistics focusing on disability measures suitable for censuses and national surveys. The major objective is to provide basic necessary information on disability that is comparable throughout the world. More specifically, the Washington Group aims to guide the development of a short set of disability measures, suitable for use in censuses, sample-based national surveys or other statistical formats for the primary purpose of informing policy on equalization of opportunities. A second priority is to recommend one or more extended sets of survey items to measure disability, or guidelines for their design, to be used as components of population surveys or as supplements to specialty surveys. These extended sets of survey items are intended to be related to the short set of disability measures. The World Health Organization (WHO) International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health has been accepted as the basic framework for the development of the sets. All disability measures recommended by the group, short or extended, will be accompanied by descriptions of their technical properties, and methodological guidance will be given on their implementation and their applicability to all population subgroups. The Washington Group disseminates its work products globally through the World Wide Web (http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/citygroup.htm) and scientific publications.

II. Progress report on work completed

A. Meetings and collaborations

3. The Washington Group has held nine annual meetings since the inception of the group: (a) from 18 to 20 February 2002, in Washington, D.C.; (b) on 9 and 10 January 2003, in Ottawa, Canada; (c) on 19 and 20 February 2004, in Brussels; (d) from 29 September to 1 October 2004, in Bangkok; (e) from 21 to 23 September 2005, in Rio de Janeiro; (f) from 10 to 13 October 2006, in Kampala; (g) from 19 to 21 September 2007, in Dublin; (h) from 29 to 31 October 2008 in Manila; and (i) from 7 to 9 October 2009, in Dar es Salaam. Annual meetings are rotated through major geographic regions to facilitate participation, especially of the developing countries. In addition, two regional workshops were held in 2005 to provide technical assistance and training for pre-testing the proposed short set census questions.

4. The Washington Group has sought to foster international collaboration, and in particular, to ensure that the efforts of the group are broad-based and inclusive of voices from developing countries from every region of the world. Thus, representatives of national statistical authorities of organizations representing persons with disabilities and of other international organizations participate in the Washington Group. Since its inception, representatives of national statistical offices in 116 countries have participated in the Washington Group. Representatives from 82 countries have attended at least one annual meeting, and 54 countries have attended more than one annual meeting. Current members of the Washington Group include 109 national statistical offices, 7 international organizations, 6 organizations that represent persons with disabilities, the United Nations Statistics Division and other United Nations affiliates (see the annex to the present report).

5. The Washington Group continues to collaborate with the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), WHO, and Eurostat on the Budapest Initiative (Task Force on the Measurement of Health Status). At a meeting held in Geneva in June 2009, the collaborative efforts of the Washington Group and the Budapest Initiative in developing extended sets of questions for use as components of population surveys, as supplements to surveys or as the core of a disability survey were presented. The testing of these questions has been supported by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) as follows.

6. ESCAP has provided the funding for the cognitive and field testing of the extended set of questions developed by the Washington Group/Budapest Initiative collaboration. Initial training in cognitive and field testing procedures took place in Bangkok during February 2009, and included six ESCAP countries (Maldives, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Mongolia, Cambodia and Kazakhstan). Those countries then participated in the cognitive and field testing of the extended question set. Canada, the United States of America and South Africa also provided cognitive interviews.

7. At the ninth meeting of the Washington Group, projects similar to those supported by ESCAP in Asia and the Pacific region were requested in other regions, particularly by delegates from African countries.

B. Recent activities and major achievements

8. Since 2001, the group has (a) developed a short question set intended for use on national censuses, accompanying rationale, and test implementation protocols; (b) provided training to countries in conducting the Washington Group tests and, more generally, on disability data collection methods; (c) conducted standardized Washington Group tests for the short set of questions in 15 countries; (d) analysed test results; (e) endorsed the short question set (with minor revisions); (f) begun development of extended question sets to be used as components of population surveys, as supplements to surveys, or as the core of a disability survey; (g) in collaboration with ESCAP, conducted standardized cognitive testing of the extended question sets in nine countries (Cambodia, Canada, Kazakhstan, Maldives, Mongolia, the Philippines, South Africa, Sri Lanka and the United States); (h) in collaboration with ESCAP, conducted standardized field testing of the extended question sets in six countries (Cambodia, Kazakhstan, Maldives, Mongolia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka); and (i) begun analysis of the cognitive and field test results.

Regional workshops

9. The Washington Group organized and held two regional workshops in 2005 in Africa and Latin America. These workshops were primarily directed towards countries in the region that were interested in including disability questions in their national censuses. The workshops familiarized countries in the region with the short set of Washington Group questions on disability, the accompanying rationale and the procedures for testing the questions. These workshops helped to build capacity for data collection on disability in many developing countries. In addition to receiving training for conducting the tests of the Washington Group questions, these countries are working internally to improve their overall approaches to data collection on disability.

10. The Washington Group has participated in the following regional workshops:

(a) The ECE Workshop on disability statistics in member countries of the Special Programme for Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) (Bishkek, 13-15 December 2006). The aim of the training workshop was to introduce participants to the best practices on disability statistics and to develop the know-how in methodologies of measurement of the health status of the population. It was organized for health statistics directors and staff engaged in the measurement of disabilities in the national statistical offices and ministries of health in Central Asia and Azerbaijan;

(b) Joint ECE-United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) training workshop on census management in South-East Europe (Sarajevo, 18-22 February 2008);

(c) Workshop on strengthening capacity for disability measurement across South Asia, sponsored by the World Bank, and a regional workshop on promoting disability data collection through the 2010 Population and Housing Censuses, sponsored by the United Nations in Bangkok (April, 2008);

(d) Joint ECE-UNFPA regional training workshop on population and housing censuses for South-Eastern European countries, held in Ohrid, Macedonia (November, 2008). The workshop was organized for senior professionals and experts from the national statistical offices of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia. The Washington Group was responsible for a full-day training session including the measurement of disability in censuses and interpreting and understanding disability as measured using the Washington Group short set of questions;

(e) In August and September 2009, at the request of the World Bank, the Washington Group assisted the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics through a training workshop designed to provide an understanding of disability and functioning using the Washington Group approach on International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF); and implementing the Washington Group short set of questions in their national Household Income and Expenditure Survey and in preparation for the 2010 census.

Cognitive and field testing

11. Short set (for use on censuses): protocols for implementing tests of the short set of questions were developed by the Washington Group and standardized testing was undertaken in 15 countries, including 13 that were funded through a grant from

the World Bank. The purpose of testing was to ensure the validity of the questions and to better understand how they operate in different settings and cultures. These tests, as well as studies in other countries employing the Washington Group approach, show an improvement over traditional census questions. Developing countries that had previously reported disability rates of about 1 or 2 per cent found rates between 8 and 15 per cent when using the Washington Group questions. These rates are much more in line with data from developed countries that use more complex approaches to disability data collection.

12. Extended set: work on extended sets of disability questions intended as components of population surveys, as supplements to surveys, or as the core of a disability survey began with the development of a matrix designed to guide the development of these question sets. The matrix was presented during the eighth meeting of the Washington Group in Manila, and work progressed as follows: (a) the establishment of an extended set(s) of questions by working group; (b) the review of existing question sets already in use in other surveys (national or research); (c) a joint Budapest Initiative/Washington Group meeting held in Washington, D.C., in July 2008, to discuss further extended question set development; (d) the development of a cognitive test protocol; (e) ESCAP/Washington Group training, held from 16 to 20 February 2009, in Bangkok, to train six ESCAP countries (Cambodia, Kazakhstan, Maldives, Mongolia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka) in cognitive and field test procedures and the subsequent cognitive testing in these countries and in Canada, the United States and South Africa; (f) Washington Group Extended Set Analysis Workshop, held in Washington, D.C., in May 2009; (g) the development of a field test protocol and field testing in the same six ESCAP countries; and (h) the presentation of results from cognitive testing and preliminary field test results to the ninth meeting of the Washington Group in Dar es Salaam.

Provision of technical assistance

13. In addition to funding countries to conduct the tests, the Washington Group used a World Bank grant to employ a consultant from January to June 2006 to provide technical training and to support national statistics offices engaged in test activities. In-person technical support was provided to two African national statistical offices. Assistance via phone and e-mail was provided to countries in Africa and South America and to Viet Nam, the Philippines and India.

Fostering international cooperation

14. The Washington Group has worked with the Statistics Division, WHO, ESCAP, ESCWA, ECE, the International Labour Organization, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank, Eurostat, the Budapest Initiative, the Foundation for Scientific and Industrial Research at the Norwegian Institute of Technology (SINTEF) and other entities to promote a unified approach to disability measurement. Several World Bank data instruments have been heavily influenced by the work of the Washington Group (in India and Uzbekistan), and SINTEF has been working in Africa to conduct independent tests of the Washington Group questions. In addition, ESCAP and WHO, in partnership with the Australian Bureau of Statistics, conducted pilot studies on the Washington Group short set of questions and the longer WHO set of questions. The study results were presented and

discussed during the fifth and sixth Washington Group meetings. The Washington Group has also been informed that the question set has been pre-tested or added to surveys in at least 11 countries. The Washington Group has embarked upon a collaboration with ESCAP for the cognitive and field testing of the extended set of questions in six participating ESCAP countries. The Washington Group continues to dialogue with the World Bank in matters of common interest and in attempts to secure funding for further activities in the testing and development of extended sets of questions on disability in other regions.

Endorsement of a set of census questions on disability

15. At the sixth annual meeting of the Washington Group, held in Kampala, test results were reported and the short set of questions on disability was endorsed by the 23 countries and 5 international agencies in attendance. Some minor wording modifications were suggested based on pre-test results presented at the meeting. The set comprises questions on six core functional domains: seeing, hearing, walking, cognition, self care and communication. In countries where resources do not permit the inclusion of six questions on a census, the first four domains are recommended for inclusion (seeing, hearing, walking and cognition); the Washington Group, however, strongly endorses the use of the six questions. These questions were based on the model of disability inherent in the World Health Organization International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health with a particular emphasis on international comparability. On the basis of information obtained from the country reports submitted by the primary country representatives just prior to the ninth meeting of the Washington Group, 21 countries indicated that the short set of questions would be included in the upcoming census round. For countries indicating that the short set of disability questions would not be used in the upcoming census round, the reasons for not using the questions included:

(a) Washington Group questions were not finalized when census questions were decided;

(b) Requirement to use the same questions that were used in previous census rounds;

(c) It was too expensive to add additional questions to census;

(d) There are too many questions; the number of disability questions allowed on the census is restricted;

(e) Respondents had trouble understanding questions during pre-testing;

(f) Concerns regarding the Washington Group short set answer categories.

III. Workplan for 2010

16. At the ninth meeting, the Washington Group agreed to its workplan for 2010. Among other items, the plan delegates specific responsibilities to working groups that meet throughout the year via e-mail and telephone conferences. Next steps for the working groups include:

(a) Work on the extended sets of questions for surveys:

(i) Continued analysis of the field test results through the first half of 2010;

(ii) Expansion of cognitive and field testing of the extended set of questions to other regions, in particular, to Europe;

(b) Work on methodological issues:

(i) Assessing the applicability of the short set of questions for specific subpopulations such as children; determining the age at which the questions are meaningful by evaluating the test data from children; and developing specific question modules for children;

(ii) Designing extended set questions for the measurement of environmental factors including both barriers and facilitators;

(iii) Evaluating the proxy data.

17. It was strongly recommended by the delegates, particularly those from African countries, that projects similar to the one funded by ESCAP in the Asia and the Pacific region also be established in other regions. It was further urged that funding assistance be provided by the Statistics Division, other regional commissions, other United Nations agencies, or regional development banks to meet this request.

18. The tenth meeting of the Washington Group will be held in November 2010 in Luxembourg. Objectives for this meeting are to:

(a) Present additional work on the extended set:

(i) Results of data analyses from the completed field testing;

(ii) Update on expansion of cognitive and field testing of the extended set of questions to other regions and presentation of results (if any);

(iii) Update on any revisions to extended set questions;

(b) Present status reports from the work groups on measurement of child disability and environmental factors and the use of proxy respondents;

(c) Discuss strategic issues.

Annex

Membership of the Washington Group on Disability Statistics

1. At present the national statistical authorities sending representatives to participate in the Washington Group include those of 116 countries and areas: Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Aruba, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Bermuda, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China, Macao Special Administrative Region of China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Curacao, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Mozambique, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Serbia and Montenegro, Sierra Leone, Singapore, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tonga, Trinidad, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In the past, the Bahamas, Comoros, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Nigeria, Tunisia, and the Turks and Caicos Islands also participated.

2. Past and present representatives of international organizations representing persons with disabilities include the European Disability Forum, Rehabilitation International, the Inter-American Institute on Disability, the African Rehabilitation Institute, and the International Federation for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus. Past and present representatives of national organizations representing persons with disabilities include the National Disability Authority in Ireland, the Coordination Office for the Integration of Displaced Persons (CORDE) in Brazil, the National Secretariat for Social Integration of the Disabled (SENADIS) in Panama, the Disabled Organization for Legal Affairs and Social Economic Development (DOLASED) in Tanzania, the Association for Persons with Cerebral Palsy in Mexico, the Puerto Rico Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Office of the Ombudsman for People with Disabilities in Puerto Rico, the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research in the United States of America, and the National Union of Disabilities Persons of Uganda (NUDIPU).

3. Other international organizations that have previously or currently participate in the Washington Group include Eurostat, Partnership Health of the European Union, the International Labour Organization, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Development Project, the World Bank, the World Health Organization, the World Health Organization Family of International Classifications Collaborating Centre, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the Economic Commission for Europe, and the United Nations Statistics Division.

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United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its fortieth session,** the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the Institute for Statistics of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The Commission is requested to take note of the report.

* E/CN.3/2010/1.

** See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2009, Supplement No. 4* (E/2009/24), chap I.A.

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Report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on the 2009 UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics

I. Introduction

1. The present report has been produced in response to the request of information of the United Nations Statistical Commission on the status of the new 2009 UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics. The report outlines the purpose and objective of the 2009 Framework, the process undertaken for its development and the next steps for its implementation.

II. Background

2. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics is the lead agency in the United Nations system for global statistics on culture. The main activities of the Institute in the field of cultural statistics are: (a) survey operations and data guardianship; (b) the development of new methodologies, standards and indicators in cultural statistics; (c) training and capacity-building in cultural statistics; and (d) the analysis and dissemination of culture data. These activities are carried out in the framework of collaboration and partnerships with national, regional and international governmental and civil-society organizations.

3. In 2005, as part of its work in the development of new methodologies, standards and indicators in cultural statistics, the Institute identified the need for a revision of and update to the 1986 Framework for Cultural Statistics making it a priority in order to strengthen its programme and activities in the field of cultural statistics.

4. Since the elaboration of the Framework in 1986, many important changes have taken place in cultural practices and policies throughout the world. Thus, by 2005, it became imperative to launch a revision process of the Framework to reflect these changes and, in particular, those related to the increased use and impact of new digital information and communication technologies.

5. A revised Framework was also needed to better reflect the demands and concerns of developing countries, the worldwide policy shift towards integrating culture within the broader economic and social agendas, as well as the new interrelated notions of "creative" industries.

6. Furthermore, a revised Framework had to consider the appropriateness and feasibility of incorporating new elements — like "intangible" cultural heritage — as well as being open to emerging issues such as the measurement of diversity.

7. Between July 2005 and December 2007, and on the basis of the expert study commissioned, the Institute undertook a first consultation with a large number of individual experts, scholars, statisticians and international organizations. In December 2007, and following the integration of the different inputs received, the Institute developed a preliminary revised draft of the new Framework. An extensive consultation programme with Member States, international organizations and other stakeholders was initiated in January 2008.

8. The consultation process consisted of four main activities, namely: (a) direct consultation with Member States soliciting comments and feedback, in particular from national statistical offices and ministries of culture or similar authorities; (b) direct consultations with international partner agencies and organizations; (c) the organization of regional consultations which offered Member States an additional opportunity to provide comments and discuss issues surrounding the proposal for a revised Framework; and (d) the establishment of a task force to finalize the revised draft of the new Framework.

9. Comments were received from all regions, including in the case of some Member States, replies from both the national statistical offices and the ministries of culture and similar authorities. All comments received were thoroughly reviewed and considered.

10. International organizations including EUROSTAT, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and individual experts were also consulted. The Institute received comments from international organizations both through the global consultation process as well as through the regional consultation process.

11. Between June 2008 and January 2009, the Institute undertook a series of consultative workshops to elicit further responses and to facilitate discussions of key aspects of the Framework between Member States and other stakeholders, particularly in the African, Arab, Asia-Pacific and Latin America regions where the response rate was somehow lower. Representatives from the national statistical offices and from national ministries of culture and similar authorities, as well as regional experts and representatives from international organizations also took part in these regional consultations. A special effort was made to reach out to countries that did not provide a response to the request of the Institute for comments on the draft Framework. The preliminary draft version of the Framework received important support and endorsement in all the regional consultations held.

Response rate by region

Region	*Contributing countries*	*Total countries*	*Response rate (in percentage)*
Sub-Saharan Africa	19	45	42
Arab States	15	20	75
Asia and the Pacific	22	52	42
Europe and North America	35	48	73
Latin America and the Caribbean	13	38	34
Total	**104**	**203**	**51**

12. The Institute established an expert task force whose mandate was to review the final version of the revised Framework, which was built from the discussions and comments received during the consultative process. In addition, the task force was to assist with the drafting of the final version and make final recommendations on the specific issues raised during the process. The task force met from 23 to 25 February 2009 at the Institute in Montreal, Canada. Its work will continue via electronic means of communication until May 2009. The task force was composed

of 12 experts in the field of cultural statistics representing a diverse global geographical composition and who for the most part had participated in the regional consultation workshops.

13. In March 2009, a briefing session on the Framework was held for UNESCO delegations during the 181st session of the UNESCO Executive Board. Subsequently, the new Framework was presented at the 35th session of the UNESCO General Conference in October 2009, where a briefing session on the Framework was also held for delegations.

III. The new 2009 Framework for Cultural Statistics

14. The 2009 UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics establishes a conceptual model for defining culture for statistical purposes. It is a tool for organizing and collecting comparable cultural data. As a classification instrument, it applies taxonomies of activities, goods and services from recognized international standard classifications to cultural statistics.

15. The measurement of the economic dimension of culture is more fully developed in the Framework due to the greater availability of economic data and the existence of the many international classification systems in use. However, equally important is the social dimension of culture, including culture participation and intangible cultural heritage. Although initial elements for their measurement are proposed, further work is required.

16. The Framework is a classification instrument that incorporates the use of currently available international classification systems such as the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities for cultural production activities, the Central Product Classification (CPC) for cultural goods and services, the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) for cultural employment, the Harmonised Commodity Description and Coding System (HS) for international flows of cultural goods, and the United Nations Draft International Classification of Activities for Time-Use Statistics (ICATUS) for cultural participation. The result is a tool and methodology designed for use at the international and national levels as a basis for organizing the collection and dissemination of cultural statistics. It attempts to reflect the widest range possible of activities related to the production, distribution and use of culture.

17. UNESCO defines culture as "the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being value systems, traditions and beliefs".[1] Whereas it is not always possible to measure such beliefs and values directly, it is possible to measure associated behaviours and practices. As such, the 2009 UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics defines culture through the identification and measurement of the behaviours and practices resulting from the beliefs and values of a society or a social group.

[1] See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies*, World Conference on Cultural Policies, Mexico City, 26 July-6 August 1982.

18. The cultural domains defined in the Framework represent a common set of economic (such as the production of goods and services) and social (such as participation in cultural activities) activities that traditionally have been regarded as being "cultural". In addition, related domains consist of other economic and social activities that may be considered "partially cultural" or that are more often regarded as being "recreational or leisure" rather than "purely cultural".

19. Although, as a starting point, most of the current standards used for elaborating these definitions are based on an economic perspective, the interpretation of the resulting domain is not limited solely to the economic aspects of culture but extends to all aspects of that domain. Thus, the definition for the measurement of "performance" includes all performances, whether these are amateur or professional and take place in a formal concert hall or in an open space in a rural village.

20. In addition, the framework emphasizes three "transversal" domains that can be measured across a range of cultural domains. The education and training, archiving and preserving, and intangible cultural heritage domains are categorized as transversal cultural domains; the inclusion of each of these three dimensions is critical to measuring the full breadth of cultural expression.

21. The capacity of countries to collect and disseminate statistics on culture will vary greatly depending upon their respective policy priorities, statistical expertise, and human and financial resources. The framework is designed explicitly to be flexible and adaptable at the national level.

22. The framework is also built upon the culture cycle model of the cultural sector, which helps to understand the relationships between the different cultural processes. The cycle illustrates the totality of practices, activities and necessary resources that are required to transform ideas into cultural goods and services that, in turn, reach consumers, participants or users.

23. The framework includes all current relevant international statistical classification systems and standards in order to maximize data comparability and the potential for using existing surveys to measure culture. These classification systems provide countries with a comprehensive framework to collect and disseminate cultural data. It also serves as a guide to measuring cultural activities, goods and services using standard economic statistics and household surveys, such as labour force surveys and censuses. Countries with no national cultural framework will be able to use the basic fundamental structure of the Framework.

IV. Conclusions

24. The 2009 UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics will lay the foundation for new methodologies, data collection and indicators developed by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, as well as for UNESCO action in the field of culture. The Commission may wish to take note of the present report.

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Items for information: industrial statistics

Industrial statistics

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report was prepared at the request of the Statistical Commission at its fortieth session (see E/2009/24, chap. I.A). The report provides an overview of recent activities in industrial statistics undertaken in response to requests of the Commission. In particular, it describes the revision of the *International Recommendations for the Index of Industrial Production*, which is presented to the Commission for approval. The Commission is also invited to take note of the activities for the implementation of international recommendations related to industrial statistics and to endorse those efforts.

* E/CN.3/2010/1.

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I. Activities carried out in response to requests of the Commission

A. Expert Group on Industrial Statistics

1. In 2005, the United Nations Statistics Division established an Expert Group on Industrial Statistics to assist and provide guidance in reviewing the work programme on industrial statistics and, in particular, to provide guidance for the revision of the *International Recommendations for Industrial Statistics*,[1] last revised in 1983, the revision of the manual on *Index Numbers of Industrial Production*,[2] last revised in 1950, and the revision of the United Nations list of industrial products, last revised in 1973.

2. The Expert Group completed its work on the United Nations list of industrial products in 2006 and its work on the *International Recommendations for Industrial Statistics* in 2008. The *Recommendations* were endorsed by the Statistical Commission in 2008.

3. The Expert Group met from 15 to 17 July 2008, in New York. The main purpose of the meeting was: to review the revised draft of the *International Recommendations for the Index of Industrial Production 2008*; provide additional guidance on a number of issues that emerged during the drafting of the document; and amend the document for submission to and endorsement by the Statistical Commission. The final discussion at the meeting focused on a smaller set of recommendations designed to ensure consistency in the calculation of the index and reflect best practices that had emerged in countries over the previous years.

4. At its meeting in 2008, the Expert Group also reviewed proposals for a quality framework for industrial statistics and reviewed a prototype for a "knowledge base on economic statistics: methods and country practices". The feedback from the Expert Group was used to further develop the two projects.

5. The complete text of the recommendations and conclusions of the meeting of the Expert Group on Industrial Statistics is available on the website of the United Nations Statistics Division (http://unstats.un.org/unsd/industry/meetings/eg2008/ac158-2.asp).

B. Revision of the *International Recommendations for the Index of Industrial Production*

1. Background

6. The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is an important short-term economic indicator in official statistics. It is an important indicator in its own right as well as being used in comparison to or conjunction with other short-term indicators to assess the performance of an economy. In some countries, IIP is also a key input for calculating volume measures as part of the compilation of the quarterly national accounts.

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[1] Statistical Papers, No. 48, Rev.1 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.83.XVII.8).

[2] Studies in Methods, No. 1 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.50.XVII.4).

7. Production indices for the industrial sector are used as a main short-term economic indicator because of the impact that fluctuations in the level of industrial activity have on the rest of the economy in many countries. The availability of production indices on a monthly basis and the strong relationship between changes in the level of industrial production and economic cycles facilitate the use of production indices as a reference series in determining or forecasting turning points in business cycles. The advantage of the production index compared to other indicators is its combination of high frequency, fast availability (for example, relative to the gross domestic product (GDP)) and its detailed activity breakdown.

8. The IIP measures the change of the volume of goods or services produced over time to describe short-term changes in value added. Gross output measures such as value of production or turnover data are more commonly used, since it is difficult to collect high frequency data to accurately measure value added. Because the IIP is a volume index, it is not influenced by price fluctuations.

9. The IIP has a wide range of users who assess the most recent economic situation of countries and the global and regional economies through aggregations for the purpose of undertaking international comparisons.

10. The *International Recommendations for the Index of Industrial Production* is intended for compilers and users of indices of industrial production. It assists compilers in producing index numbers so that they can serve as reliable international comparisons of economic performance and behaviour, using the best international practices. The publication also assists countries that plan to set up a more comprehensive system of volume measures not only by providing the methodological foundations for the index number compilation, but also by giving practical guidance on individual steps and elements of the compilation process.

11. It is recognized that, owing to practical constraints, some of the recommendations in the publication may not be immediately attainable by all statistical offices and therefore should serve as guideposts for agencies, as they revise and improve their IIP programmes.

12. The publication also serves the needs of users by making them aware of the methods employed by statistical offices to compile the indices. In addition, it discusses potential IIP calculation errors, biases and incompatibilities between different approaches, so that users can properly interpret the results. Users are therefore encouraged to consult metadata information on index number calculation methods used in different countries, to form a better judgement of the comparability of the indices. The United Nations Statistics Division has issued a publication, *Country practices for the collection and calculation of the index of industrial production*,[3] which can be used in this way.

2. Revision process

13. The publication, which is provided as a background document to the Commission, is a revision of the original *Index Numbers of Industrial Production*[2] manual published by the United Nations in 1950. It takes into account methodological developments in the field of index number calculation that have

[3] *Country practices for the collection and calculation of the index of industrial production* (ESA/STAT/2008/8).

emerged over the past decades and describes new recommended methodological standards for the compilation of index numbers of industrial production.

14. This revision was carried out at the request of the Statistical Commission.[4] The general approach to the revision, including an identification and initial discussion of the main areas of change was discussed at Expert Group meetings in 2005 and 2007.

15. The revised recommendations take into account other recently revised statistical standards and recommendations and contribute to a coherent set of international guidelines, including the *System of National Accounts, 2008*, the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities, Revision 4 (ISIC), the Central Product Classification, Version 2, the *International Recommendations for Industrial Statistics 2008*, the *Producer Price Index Manual: Theory and Practice* and the *Consumer Price Index Manual: Theory and Practice*.

16. Additional input to the drafting of the document, in particular with respect to the recommendations concerning the indicators to be used for the measurement of individual industries (shown in part II of the publication), was obtained through a survey on country practices, as mentioned in paragraph 12 above.

17. Based on the guidance received, a first draft of the publication was prepared by the United Nations Statistics Division and presented at a meeting of the Expert Group in 2008. Additional modifications to the draft recommendations were made as a result of discussions at that meeting.

18. The first public draft of the publication was the subject of a worldwide consultation in early 2009; 42 countries and organizations provided additional input for the finalization of the *International Recommendations for the Index of Industrial Production*.

19. The final version of the publication is now available to the Commission as a background document.

3. Coverage

20. The revised publication draws on a wide range of experience and expertise, based on consultations with a large number of potential users. They outline practical and appropriate measurement methods, issues and lessons from recent theoretical and practical work in the area.

21. The revised publication was developed using a slightly different approach, compared to the 1950 version. In addition to key IIP theory and concepts, it also provides practical guidance, via the use of data examples, to demonstrate statistical practice. A separate chapter provides guidance on methods and approaches at a detailed industry level in order to assist countries in producing high-quality short-term economic indicators that are also internationally comparable.

22. The original methodological publication on index numbers of industrial production was published in 1950 and has not been revised since. However, theory on index numbers has progressed and the changes in methodology had to be incorporated into a revised version of that publication, so that all countries could

[4] The revision of the publication was placed on the work programme of the United Nations Statistics Division in 2004 (see E/CN.3/2006/3, para. 14). Work commenced in 2005 and the Statistical Commission endorsed the work undertaken on IIP by the Division in 2006 and 2008.

take a common approach to the collection and calculation of these important indicators.

23. The changes in methodology are reflected in the revised publication; they include the shift towards using deflation methods rather than volume aggregates as the more reliable method for the majority of industries, which also addresses the issue of quality adjustment through the use of better price index deflators; the more frequent updating of the base weights; the use of chain-linking index number series rather than series recalculation; the use of net value added at basic prices as the new weighting variable; and stricter requirements for international data reporting.

24. The updated methodology described in the revised publication, used in conjunction with the *Compilation Manual for an Index of Services Production*, published by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, now provides assistance to data producers in the compilation of volume indices for the majority of goods and services producing industries.

4. Main changes

25. The changes in the revised document are the result of changes introduced in the recent revisions of related standards for economic statistics and of changes in methodology, based on best practices observed in Member States. This is reflected, in particular, in the change of the scope of the IIP and in the changes in calculation methods, index weighting practices, linking and rebasing issues.

26. The current scope of the revised publications is defined in terms of the International Standard of Industrial Classification, Revision 4, namely the scope of the industrial sector is defined to cover sections B (mining and quarrying), C (manufacturing), D (electricity, gas steam and air conditioning supply) and E (water collection, treatment and supply, sewage, waste collection and remediation activities). This is a reflection of the change in scope of "industrial statistics", as defined in the *International Recommendations for Industrial Statistics 2008*, and constitutes a change from the original 1950 scope, which was restricted to mining and quarrying, manufacturing, and electricity and gas.

27. The recommendations for calculation methods, index weighting practices and linking and rebasing of index number series have changed from previous practices. Historically, the production indices for the industrial sector were compiled using a fixed weight approach, with weights updated at five-year intervals. However, new methods and approaches have been developed over the last several decades to address the deficiencies of these types of indices. The chain-linked approach, with annually updated weights, has been the preferred approach in recent years and is the recommended method presented in the revised publication.

5. Conclusion

28. The Commission is invited to adopt part I of the *International Recommendations for the Index of Industrial Production 2010*, containing the recommendations for statistical units, classifications, sources and methods; to endorse part II, containing guidance on quality indicators and variables by industry for IIP calculation; and to recommend to Member States that they use and adhere to the practices described therein for the production of comparable industrial production indices.

C. Technical cooperation activities

29. The implementation of the revised *International Recommendations for Industrial Statistics 2008* was an important element of technical cooperation activities in the past year.

30. The Statistics Division continued its programme of workshops on manufacturing statistics, with a third workshop for Latin American countries. Like the previous workshops, it followed the elements of the statistical production process framework and covered in detail techniques for data collection on manufacturing statistics.

31. A similar series of workshops was also initiated for the African countries. A first exploratory workshop held in Lusaka was attended by 34 representatives from 26 countries and organizations. The main goal of the series of workshops is to enable countries to produce comprehensive and comparable statistics on manufacturing, in accordance with the *International Recommendations for Industrial Statistics 2008*.

32. In the future, the scope of the Statistics Division's technical assistance activities will be broadened to include procedures for the compilation of indices of industrial production.

33. The revised recommendations have also been used in the technical assistance programmes of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). A new handbook with a model questionnaire using recommended data items of the *International Recommendations for Industrial Statistics 2008* has been prepared. The implementation of the 2008 version of the publication has been the main objective of all ongoing and pipeline projects undertaken by UNIDO in the field of industrial statistics.

34. In 2008 and 2009, UNIDO conducted four training workshops on industrial statistics under its regular programme and project activities for Asian and African countries, at which about 85 statisticians were trained in the new recommendations for industrial statistics. Two training workshops were conducted in cooperation with the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics and the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific. Individual country workshops were conducted in Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, and Bangkok.

II. Data collection programme on industrial statistics

35. Data collection activities for industrial statistics continue in the Statistics Division and UNIDO, following the agreed division of labour between the two agencies.

36. The data collection on industrial commodity production statistics at the United Nations Statistics Division includes published data on the production of about 620 commodities in about 200 countries and territories. The data are collected and published in terms of quantities produced and the value of the produced commodities, following the guidelines approved by the Expert Group on Industrial Statistics in 2005. Data for the 2007 edition of the *Industrial Commodity Statistics Yearbook* are also available online on the UNdata website.

37. In addition, a data collection on monthly production continues for a selected list of commodities and for construction. The results of this data collection are published in the *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics*.

38. The data collection on index numbers of industrial production continues to provide monthly, quarterly and annual data, which are published in the *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics* and in the *Statistical Yearbook*. A growing number of countries are able to provide current index number data in terms of the International Standard of Industrial Classification, Revision 4. Consequently, the Statistics Division is preparing the changeover to the new classification for the calculation of regional and world index numbers.

39. The work on index numbers of industrial production is also part a broader effort to collect and publish high frequency indicators to monitor economies worldwide. While IIP is just one of the indicators in the proposed high frequency indicator template, similar data collection and processing techniques may be used to start the broader programme of monitoring a larger set of indicators.

40. The "Knowledge base on economic statistics — methods and country practices", which had been proposed to the Commission in 2008,[5] has been further developed, in cooperation with other agencies and with the support of many Member States. The knowledge base now holds a significant amount of information related to various aspects of basic economic statistics, covering international recommendations, guidelines and country practices.

41. The knowledge base was made available to the general public in September 2009. Updating the knowledge base with relevant documents, especially on methods and country practices, will remain part of the work programme of the United Nations Statistics Division, including the programme on industrial statistics.

[5] See E/2008/24, decision 39/108, para. (d).

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Voorburg Group on Services Statistics

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its fortieth session,** the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the Statistical Commission the report of the Voorburg Group on Services Statistics. The report presents the progress that has been achieved in delivering tangible outputs in the course of the last five years. The Commission is invited to take note of the report and may wish to express its views on the progress of the work of the Group.

* E/CN.3/2010/1.
** See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2009, Supplement No. 4* (E/2009/24), chap. I.A.

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Report of the Voorburg Group on Services Statistics

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I. Introduction

1. In the late 1980s, the Voorburg Group on Services Statistics was established in response to a request from the United Nations Statistical Commission, for assistance in developing service statistics. The first meeting, hosted by the Netherlands Statistical Office was held in January of 1987 in Voorburg (the Netherlands), from which the group derives its name.

2. The creation of the Voorburg Group was not to be another forum for the exchange of information. Instead, it was to be a group of countries with interest and capacity to carry on developmental work between and during meetings, following well-established rules and a clear timetable. In fact, the purpose of the Group was to address issues related to the production of services statistics, including service product outputs and inputs, the estimation of the real product of service activities, price indices of service products and industries, and their implications for product and industry classification (Central Product Classification (CPC) and International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC)).

3. Over the years, the Group was successful in developing product and industrial classification, model surveys and discussing a wide range of topics such as the information society, the short-term indicators, and international trade in services, to name only a few. In 2005, in response to some concerns about the Group's broad agenda and the wide participation, the Voorburg Bureau reviewed the focus and modalities of the Group and prepared a Strategic Vision[1] describing the mandate, the role and the workplan for the future of the Group. This Vision paper was presented at the thirty-sixth session of the United Nation Statistical Commission, in March 2005, where the Voorburg Group mandate was renewed with a particular emphasis on the development of the service producer price indices (SPPIs).

4. The present report sets out the vision, the innovative governance and structured approach put in place by the Bureau of the Voorburg Group in 2004-2005 to develop service statistics. It also presents the progress that has been achieved in delivering tangible output in the course of the last five years.

II. Vision and workplan for 2005-2009

5. In its 2005 vision, the primary objectives of the Group continued to be the proper identification and definition of services industries, products and measures of turnover combined with a coordinated effort to produce producer price indices for use as deflators in order to improve the measurement of services components of gross domestic product (GDP) at constant prices. Consequently, the Group focused its work on: (a) classification issues; (b) output measures; and (c) price indices.

6. To fully achieve this primary objective, three major functions were performed: (a) developing new concepts, methods and best practices; (b) maintaining and improving the knowledge base; and (c) disseminating best practices and knowledge transfer.

[1] Louis Marc Ducharme, "Strategic Vision of the Voorburg Group on Services Statistics for 2005-2008", background document to the Statistical Commission at its thirty-sixth session.

7. The first function is the Voorburg Group's main function and has existed since the inception of the Group. The second function is needed because methods and best practices evolve with time. The Voorburg Group has taken that role explicitly for the service price indices, as there were no other forums to deal with the issues. The third function is similar to what Eurostat and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have done in the past, namely worked on dissemination through workshops and manuals. However, the recent experience of developing price indices shows that the best way of learning about constructing service price indices is to observe, participate and exchange with more advanced countries in a structured forum.

Table 1
Scope and functions of the Voorburg Group

	Classification	*Output measures*	*Price indices*
Development	Central Product Classification[a]	Model surveys[a]	Collected papers[b] (in development)
Maintenance	United Nations Statistical Division technical subgroup[a]	Reviews of model survey[a]	Ongoing review of best practices[c]
Dissemination/knowledge transfer	United Nations Statistical Division[b]	United Nations technical paper[b] Voorburg[b]	Manual, workshops[c] Voorburg website, IMF, Eurostat[c]

[a] Work completed.
[b] Work in progress — almost completed.
[c] Work to be done.

8. In addition to its renewed focus, the Voorburg Group Bureau also strengthened its governance by establishing a five-year workplan focusing on its core business (classification, turnover and prices) and implementing an innovative and structured approach in order to produce concrete deliverables.

9. The five-year plan proposed three main objectives:

(a) The creation of a body of knowledge summarizing the best practices for classification, turnover/output and prices;

(b) The increased coverage of the SPPI development;

(c) The improvement of the dissemination of best practices.

10. The outcome for each of these objectives should be: (a) an increased documentation on best practices through the preparation of 12 mini-presentations for two new sectors every year and the completion of two sector papers; (b) an increased coverage of the SPPI development; and (c) the establishment of a comprehensive database of all papers produced since the inception of the Group, on the Voorburg website (http://www.voorburggroup.org).

III. Innovative governance and structured approach: the Voorburg Group workplan

11. To deliver on these three global objectives, the Voorburg Group had to take advantage of methodological developments on turnover and service producer price indices based on practical experiences for a wide spectrum of sector. The Group introduced several innovations in the process development of concepts and methods as well as in the tools used to enhance and structure better the activities of development.

A. Process development

12. In 2006, the process development of new concepts and methodology was structured in a two-year cycle. In the first year, a selected group of countries (normally three) with some experiences on the sector to be developed would present their experience in a structured session called a mini-presentation, where the discussant would be responsible for facilitating the group discussion and presenting the national accounts perspective. Recognizing the equally important development of turnover (output measures), prices and classifications, these mini-presentation sessions try to present a balance among these three areas. In the second year, a summary paper called a sector paper is prepared, highlighting the best practices for classification, turnover and prices. The paper is discussed and the best practices are finalized in one body of knowledge. One of the innovations of the new format of the sector paper is the codification of the best practice in a summary table that may be used as a guide for countries that are expanding their surveys to new sectors (see example in annex III).

13. Given the large amount of work produced before the introduction of this new process development, the Group decided in 2008 to add an activity called "revisited sector papers", which build upon previously issued mini-presentations on prices (presented prior to 2006), and complete them with issues related to turnover and classification to the level of a "sector paper". This allows the Group to leverage past work very effectively with a minimum of investment.

14. This new process development has improved the way knowledge is created, communicated, and shared and how best practices are adopted in a coherent and comparable manner. In the end, both the revisited papers and sector papers are considered as the final outcome of the Voorburg development work for that sector.

B. Tools

15. To help with the development process, a few tools were established. The first tool is the Content Development Framework, which provides the reporting structure for "country's mini-presentations" on prices and on turnover and for the "sector papers", where the three elements of price, turnover, and classification are combined into one report.

16. The Group also has developed living documents, including a thesaurus for prices, a Glossary and a General Methodology Paper. These documents are important tools that have allowed the establishment of a common language between

members of the Group. Their existence has reduced the amount of duplication and useless repetitions in the sector papers. The General Methodology Paper has provided a common framework for the development of the service price indices. In the same vein, the paper outlining key issues in the development of services statistics from a national accounting perspective was an important contribution to remind the Group of the framework for the development of the turnover and price statistics.

17. In addition to these new initiatives, the Bureau has been monitoring progress made by countries in the development of service statistics through the industry scorecard. In fact, many countries provide progress reports each year which are used to assess Voorburg Group country achievement in all areas and serve as part of the Group's concrete deliverables. Progress reports have been produced for over 30 industries during the meetings from 2006 through 2009.

IV. Achievements and remaining priorities

18. In the course of the period 2005-2009, the Voorburg Group managed to address all of the concerns of the Statistical Commission. In 2005, the Voorburg Group prepared and adopted a Strategic Vision and objectives for the next five years. At the Wiesbaden meeting in 2006, the Group adopted the new process and the Content Development Framework tool, which provided a structure to manage and monitor in a very systematic way the development work on service statistics. In 2008, the Group expanded its activities to review past work and ensure one body of knowledge underlying best practices. Finally, it gathered all the documentation on its website and improved the search engine tool for better dissemination of the results.

19. The direct consequence of these measures is reflected in the growing number of sectors that have been completed and documented on the official website and the increased participation of countries in the development work of the Group. For example, the number of completed sector papers went from two in 2005 to four in the following years. It doubled in 2009, when efforts were made to revisited papers in order to make them a more comprehensive body of knowledge.

Table 2
Number of sectors in development and completed, 2006-2009

Number of sectors	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*
In progress	3	2	2	3[a]
Completed	4	4	4	8[b]

[a] Including a first draft of a sector paper on wholesale trade.
[b] Including revisited papers.

20. The outcomes of the recent workplan were numerous: (a) a substantial increase in complete documentation on best practices for more than 20 sectors, representing close to 30 per cent of valued added GDP; (b) a greater participation of member countries in the development process; and (c) an increase by fivefold of the SPPI development and an improved search tool on the website of the Group.

21. Given the success of its new governance, the Voorburg Group intends to complete most of the revisited papers in the next couple of years and start to address the more complex service sectors such as: banking; finance and insurance; wholesale and retail trade; and the issue of quality adjustment of services. On this front, there is a need to coordinate many of these new developments with the Ottawa Group on Consumer Prices, where some of the conceptual work has already begun. Other themes also need to be addressed, such as trade in services, chain values and transfer pricing. For the time being, these themes have been excluded from the mandate until best practices for SPPI and turnover are well established. At the 2010 meeting, the Voorburg Group should develop its future workplan, which could be presented to the Commission.

Annex I

Consultation of the Voorburg Group with the Statistical Commission in March 2005[a]

Being attentive to the criticism raised, the Bureau of the Voorburg Group asked, in March 2005, the Statistical Commission to clarify the future role and responsibility of the Group:

(a) Is the mandate of the Group still to establish internationally comparable methods for the proper measurement of the service sector of the economy in current and constant prices?

(b) Is the function of the Group to develop concepts, methods and best practices in the areas of classification, output measures and price indices?

(c) Is the function of the Group to maintain and adjust concepts, methods and best practices in the areas of classification, output measures and price indices? If not, who is responsible for it?

(d) Is the function of the Group to transfer knowledge on concepts, methods and best practices in the areas of classification, output measures and price indices? If not, who is responsible for it?

[a] See E/CN.3/2005/5, annex II, para. II.16.

Annex II

Summary lists of sectors developed by the Voorburg Group, 2004-2009

Sector	*Activities*	*Year*
Air passenger and freight transportation	Mini-presentations on PPI	2004
Property and casualty insurance	Mini-presentation on PPI	2004
Investigation and security services	Mini-presentation on PPI	2004
Bookkeeping and accounting services	Mini-presentation on PPI	2004
Wired and wireless telecommunications services	Mini-presentation on PPI	2004
Pre-packaged software and computer services	Mini-presentation on PPI	2004
Car and truck rental	Mini-presentation on PPI	2004
Labour recruitment and the provision of temporary workers	Mini-presentation on PPI	2004
Travel agencies and tour operators	Mini-presentation on CPC	2004
Food and beverage services	Mini-presentation on CPC	2004
Product advertising	Mini-presentation on turnover	2004
Quality adjustments	Sector paper	2004
Information society (information and communications technology)	Mini-presentation on CPC and turnover	2004
Waste management and remediation services	Mini-presentation on CPC and turnover	2004
Management of intangible assets	Mini-presentation on CPC and turnover	2004
Model survey	Turnover paper	2005
Courier services	Mini-presentation on the producer price index (PPI)	2005
Structural business	Mini-presentation on turnover	2005
Information technology services	Mini-presentation on PPI	2005
Information products in the Central Product Classification (CPC)/North American Product Classification System (NAPCS)	Classification	2005
Labour recruitment in corporate services	Mini-presentation on PPI	2005
Business and management consulting	Mini-presentation on PPI and turnover	2005

Sector	*Activities*	*Year*
Market research	Mini-presentation on PPI	2005
Railroad	Mini-presentation on PPI, CPC and turnover	2005
Rental and leasing	Mini-presentation on PPI	2005
Retail trade	Mini-presentation on turnover	2005
Investigation and security	Mini-presentation on PPI	2005
Glossary/thesaurus	Paper	2006
Freight transport by road	Mini-presentations on PPI and turnover/output	2006
Management consultancy	Mini-presentations on PPI and turnover/output	2006
Telecommunications	Contributed paper	2006
Architectural services	Contributed paper	2006
Freight transport	Contributed paper	2006
Manual for an index of services production	Paper	2006
Glossary/thesaurus	Paper	2007
Freight transport by road	Sector paper	2007
Management consultancy	Sector paper	2007
General methodology	Paper	2007
Information technology industries	Mini-presentations on PPI and turnover/outputs	2007
Software consultancy services	Mini-presentation on PPI	
Needs of the national accounts	Paper	2007
Glossary/thesaurus	Paper	2008
Information technology service industries	Sector paper	2008
Information technology in relation to offshore outsourcing	Mini-presentation	2008
Wired, wireless, satellite and telecommunications services	Mini-presentations on PPI and turnover/outputs	2008
Wholesale trade	Mini-presentations on PPI and turnover/outputs	2008

Sector	*Activities*	*Year*
Accounting, bookkeeping and auditing activities and tax consultancy and real estate, excluding imputed rents	Revisited sector paper	2008
Advertising and market research and public opinion polling	Revisited sector paper	2008
Architectural and engineering activities and related technical consultancy	Revisited sector paper	2008
Glossary/thesaurus	Paper	2009
Update on the general methodology	Paper	2009
Effect of globalization/information technology industry	Paper	2009
Wired, wireless, satellite and other telecommunications	Sector paper	2009
Banking and credit	Mini-presentations on PPI and turnover/outputs	2009
Rail transportation	Mini-presentations on PPI and turnover/outputs	2009
Water transportation	Mini-presentations on PPI and turnover/outputs	2009
Air transportation	Revisited sector paper	2009
Rental and leasing services	Revisited sector paper	2009
Employment services	Revisited sector paper	2009
Investigation and security services	Revisited sector paper	2009
Advertising and market research services and public opinion polling	Revisited sector paper	2009
Real estate, excluding imputed rents	Revisited sector paper	2009
Wholesale trade	Draft sector paper	2009

Annex III

Example of a summary table of best practice

Category	*Data source and method of collection*	*Level of detail collected*	*Frequency*	*Advantages and disadvantages*
Best practice	One or many surveys with different frequencies (may include economic census) **Methods**: Mail survey Interview and mail survey Census If available, data from the regulation authority may be a substitute	Industry detail according to ISIC or NAICS Product detail (CPC, NAPCS, CPA)	Annual and sub-annual collection (monthly or quarterly)	**Advantages**: Provide detailed information for the national accounts on a timely manner (monthly, quarterly and annual data) Provides benchmarking and current economic analysis Allows the construction of input-output tables (commodities by industries) **Disadvantages**: This option is the most expensive given complexity of the survey Large response burden Response rates are normally lower for this kind of survey
Good practice	One or many surveys with different frequencies **Methods:** Mail survey Interview and mail survey	Industry detail only	Annual and sub-annual	**Advantages**: Provide detailed information for the national accounts on a timely manner (monthly, quarterly and annual data) Provides benchmarking and current economic analysis **Disadvantages**: This option is the most expensive given complexity of the survey Large response burden Response rates are normally lower for this kind of survey

Category	*Data source and method of collection*	*Level of detail collected*	*Frequency*	*Advantages and disadvantages*
Minimum requirement	Administrative or mixed model	Industry detail only	Annual	**Advantages**:
				Least expensive
				Little or no response burden
				Large coverage
				Disadvantages:
				Data coverage and definition can be imprecise
				Least timely

Abbreviations: CPA, Classification of Products by Activities; CPC, Central Product Classification; ISIC, International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities; NAICS, North American Industry Classification System; NAPCS, North American Product Classification System; SPPI, service producer price index.

Annex IV

Achievements of objectives for the period 2005-2009

Objectives	*Output*	*Outcome*
Creation of a body of knowledge summarizing the best practices on the classification, turnover and prices of the service sector	Production of complete documentation on best practices for prices, turnover and classification for more than 20 sectors representing more than 30 per cent of value added for service	Improved coherence and standardization of documentation Greater participation of member countries in the development work of the service sector
Increase coverage of SPPI	Coverage in terms of sectors covered has increased fivefold during the period	Best practices rated in terms of resources available
Improvement of dissemination	Scanning of all papers presented in the last 22 years Improved search tool of the database www.voorburggroup.org	Better access and dissemination of the output